

Claims

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. In a computer network having an advisory module operable to communicate with a management system through a network device, the management system managing operations of one or more field service providers employed to provide a service at a destination facility, a method for providing advisory information to the management system, the method comprising:

receiving collected data related to the destination facility, the collected data being associated with a data type;

10 analyzing the collected data to generate a data conclusion, the data conclusion being based on the data type of the collected data;

15 determining whether the collected data is associated with a time-critical situation at the destination facility;

if the collected data is associated with a time-critical situation at the destination facility, mapping the data conclusion to time-critical advisory information; and

20 responsive to the operation of mapping the data conclusion to time-critical advisory information, presenting the time-critical advisory information to the management system through the network device.

25 2. A method as defined in claim 1, further comprising:

if the collected data is associated with a non time-critical situation at the destination facility, mapping the data conclusion to non time-critical advisory information; and
storing the non time-critical advisory information in a storage module.

30 3. A method as defined in claim 2, further comprising:

producing a copy of the time-critical advisory information; and
storing the copy of the time-critical advisory information in the storage module.

4. A method as defined in claim 3, wherein the storage module has one or more

35 customer account records having one or more data-type records, the storing act comprising:

if the collected data is associated with a time-critical situation at the destination facility, storing the copy of the time-critical advisory information in a specific data-type record based on the data-type of the collected data; and

5 if the collected data is associated with a non time-critical situation at the destination facility, storing the non time-critical advisory information in a specific data-type record based on the data-type of the collected data.

5. A method as defined in claim 4, further comprising:

10 receiving a customer account code input by a requesting entity via a communication device, the customer account code specifying a specific customer account record;

accessing the specific data-type record associated with the specific customer account record based on a specialty area specified in an identification code input by the requesting entity;

retrieving advisory information stored in the specific data-type record; and

transmitting the retrieved advisory information to the requesting entity via the communication device.

6. A method as defined in claim 5, wherein the requesting entity is a field service provider.

7. A method as defined in claim 5, wherein the requesting entity is a management system.

8. A method as defined in claim 1 further comprising:

25 receiving an instruction from the management system requesting that the time-critical advisory information be provided to a field service provider; and presenting the time-critical advisory information directly to the field service provider.

9. A method as defined in claim 1, wherein the management system manages operations of a service providing company employed to provide a service to a customer at the destination facility and the receiving act comprises:

30 collecting device data associated with a utility device maintained at the destination location;

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collecting business data associated with the customer; and
collecting census data associated with the destination facility.

10. A method as defined in claim 1, wherein the operation of determining whether the
5 collected data is associated with a time-critical situation at the destination facility comprises:
analyzing the collected data against an escalation rule to determine whether the collected data
satisfies time-critical criterion.

11. A method as defined in claim 1, wherein the presenting act comprises:
transmitting time-critical advisory information to a network device used by the management
10 system in interacting with the advisory module via the computer network.

12. A method as defined in claim 11, wherein the network device is a computing module
and the advisory information is in the form of a script.

13. A method as defined in claim 12, wherein the script is in a form selected from the
group consisting of an audio script, a textual script, a binary script and an audio/visual script.

14. A method as defined in claim 13, wherein the management system is a computing
system communicating with the advisory module via a computer-based language.

15. A method as defined in claim 13, wherein the management system is a person
receiving natural language scripts from the advisory module.

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16. A network advisory system interacting with a management system, the network advisory system comprising:

a data collector receiving collected data related to a destination facility, the collected data being associated with a data type;

5 an intelligence module receiving the collected data from the data collector and generating a data conclusion relating the collected data to an advisory rule corresponding to the data type;

an escalation module receiving the data conclusion and analyzing the data conclusion against an escalation rule to determine whether the collected data is associated with a time-critical situation.

10 a mapping module mapping the data conclusion to advisory information based on the data type of the collected data; and

a registration/communication module automatically presenting the advisory information to the management system if the escalation module determines that the collected data is associated with a time critical situation.

17. A network advisory system as defined in claim 16, wherein the data collector receives device data associated with a utility device located at the destination facility.

18. A network advisory system as defined in claim 16, wherein the data collector receives account data associated with a service being provided at the destination facility.

25 19. A network advisory system as defined in claim 16, wherein the registration/communication module presents the advisory information to a field service provider upon receiving a request from the management system instructing the registration/communication module to provide the advisory information to the field service provider.

20. A network advisory system as defined in claim 16 further comprising:
a storage module storing the advisory information, wherein the registration/communication module retrieves the advisory information stored in the storage module and transmits the advisory information to a requesting entity accessing the network advisory system via a communication device.

21. A network advisory system as defined in claim 20, wherein the storage module comprises one or more customer account records, the customer account records including one or more data-type records, wherein the advisory information is stored in and retrieved from a data-type record based on the data type of the collected data.

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22. A network advisory system as defined in claim 21, wherein the registration/communication module selects the data-type record storing the advisory information based on a customer account code and an identification code associated with the requesting entity, retrieves the advisory information stored in the data-type record and transmits the advisory information to the requesting entity.

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23. In a computer network having a server computer operable to communicate with a management system through a network device, a method for providing advisory information to a field service provider, the advisory information generated from collected data being associated with a data type and a destination location, the method comprising:

5 determining whether the collected data identifies a time-critical situation at the destination facility;

if the collected data identifies a time-critical situation at the destination facility, mapping the data conclusion to time-critical advisory information;

10 responsive to the operation of mapping the data conclusion to time-critical advisory information, presenting the time-critical advisory information to the management system via the network device;

receiving a request from the management system to present the time-critical advisory information to the field service provider; and

presenting the time-critical advisory information to the field service provider.

15 24. A method as defined in claim 23, wherein the time-critical advisory information is in the form of a script.

20 25. A method as defined in claim 23, wherein the management system presents the time-critical advisory information to the field service provider.

25 27. A method as defined in claim 23 further comprises selecting one or more appropriate field service providers to receive the time-critical advisory information and wherein the operation of presenting the time-critical advisory information comprises presenting the time-critical advisory information to each of the one or more field service providers.

28. A computer program product readable by a computing system and encoding a computer program of instructions for executing a computer process for providing advisory information to a management system in a computer network having an advisory module operable to communicate with the management system through a network device, the management system managing operations of one or more field service providers employed to provide a service at a destination facility, the computer process comprising:

5 receiving collected data related to the destination facility, the collected data being associated with a data type;

10 analyzing the collected data to generate a data conclusion, the data conclusion being based on the data type of the collected data;

determining whether the collected data is associated with a time-critical situation at the destination facility;

15 if the collected data is associated with a time-critical situation at the destination facility, mapping the data conclusion to time-critical advisory information; and

20 responsive to the operation of mapping the data conclusion to time-critical advisory information, presenting the time-critical advisory information to the management system through the network device.

29. The computer process in the computer program product of claim 28, wherein the computer process further comprises:

if the collected data is associated with a non time-critical situation at the destination facility, mapping the data conclusion to non time-critical advisory information; and

25 storing the non time-critical advisory information in a storage module.

30. The computer process in the computer program product of claim 28, wherein the computer process further comprises:

producing a copy of the time-critical advisory information; and

25 storing the copy of the time-critical advisory information in the storage module.

31. The computer process in the computer program product of claim 30, the storage module has one or more customer account records having one or more data-type records, the storing act comprising:

if the collected data is associated with a time-critical situation at the destination facility,

5 storing the copy of the time-critical advisory information in a specific data-type record based on the data-type of the collected data; and

if the collected data is associated with a non time-critical situation at the destination facility, storing the non time-critical advisory information in a specific data-type record based on the data-type of the collected data.

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32. The computer process in the computer program product of claim 31, wherein the computer process further comprises:

receiving a customer account code input by a requesting entity via a communication device, the customer account code specifying a specific customer account record;

15 accessing the specific data-type record associated with the specific customer account record based on a specialty area specified in an identification code input by the requesting entity;

retrieving advisory information stored in the specific data-type record; and

transmitting the retrieved advisory information to the requesting entity via the communication device.

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33. The computer process in the computer program product of claim 28, wherein the computer process further comprises:

receiving an instruction from the management system requesting that the time-critical advisory information be provided to a field service provider; and

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presenting the time-critical advisory information directly to the field service provider.

34. The computer process in the computer program product of claim 28, wherein the operation of determining whether the collected data is associated with a time-critical situation at the destination facility comprises:

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analyzing the collected data against an escalation rule to determine whether the collected data satisfies time-critical criterion.